

PD020109US

17

Abstract

An architecture for a multimedia peer-to-peer home network allows the simple definition of peer groups, or zones, where each peer is capable of automatically identifying whether other peers are members of the same group, or of another group, by using group labels. Each peer may freely cooperate with the other peers of the same group, or with peers of previously specified other groups, e.g. exchange information or share resources. The architecture aims to map an atmosphere of trust existing between users to a technical system, namely their respective home networks. Using this architecture, it is e.g. possible that users who trust each other may give each other access to their own home network, or parts of it. Advantageously, the invention simplifies network operation by not requiring the user to have special networking knowledge.